

Application Serial No.: 10/803,701  
Amdt. dated March 21, 2006  
Reply to Non-Final Office Action of January 11, 2006

### **REMARKS/ARGUMENTS**

The Office Action dated January 11, 2006 and the references cited therein have been carefully considered. In response to the Office Action, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 4, 10 and 13 and canceled Claims 2 and 11 which, when considered with the remarks set forth below, are deemed to place the case in condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, Claims 1-4 and 10-13 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,931,110 to Bates. Claims 5 and 6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bates patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,233,316 to Schier et al. and Claims 7-9 and 14 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the Bates patent in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,529,593 to Nelson.

#### ***Independent Claims 1 and 10***

Applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 10 to define a method and system for placing a telephone call from a caller using a prepaid phone card. The method and system involve connecting a caller with a caller interface having a speech recognition application, receiving voice input from the caller in the form of a personal identification number (PIN) spoken by the caller, converting the spoken personal identification number (PIN) into computer readable text, comparing the converted computer readable text with a personal identification number (PIN) assigned to the caller's phone card and previously stored in a database and placing a requested telephone call if the converted computer readable text from the caller matches the personal identification number (PIN) assigned to the caller's phone card stored in the database. It is respectfully submitted that none of the cited prior art references, taken alone or combined, discloses the step of receiving voice input from the caller in the form of a personal identification number (PIN) spoken by the caller, as defined in amended Claims 1 and 10.

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In particular, while the Bates patent discloses a system utilizing a voice recognition application, this application is only used to verify a user's voice pattern. More specifically, once the user enters a PIN number in a conventional manner, the user may enter a calling card set-up mode, wherein the voice recognition application can be enabled. When the voice recognition application is enabled, the user is asked to speak a phrase and the voice recognition application checks whether the spoken voice pattern matches the stored voice pattern. (See column 4, lines 3-11.) Nowhere in the Bates patent is there any mention of the user verbally providing a personal identification number (PIN) to initiate a telephone call. Furthermore, there is no teaching or suggestion in the Bates patent of converting a spoken PIN into computer readable text and comparing the converted text with a PIN assigned to the caller's phone card and previously stored in a database, as defined in amended Claims 1 and 10. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1 and 10, as amended, and the claims that depend therefrom patentably distinguish over the prior art.

#### ***Dependent Claims 4 and 13***

It is respectfully submitted that Claims 4 and 13 are patentable based on their respective dependency on amended Claims 1 and 10. Moreover, Claims 4 and 13 have been further amended to clarify the voice prompting feature of the present invention. Specifically, Claims 4 and 13 define a method and system wherein the caller is voice prompted to verbally provide a personal identification number (PIN) to initiate a telephone call. It is respectfully submitted that this additional feature further distinguishes Claims 4 and 13 over the prior art.

As set forth above, the Bates patent does not disclose a system or a method wherein a user verbally provides a personal identification number (PIN) to initiate a telephone call using a pre-paid phone card. Moreover, the Bates patent does not teach or suggest voice prompting the caller to verbally provide the personal identification number as defined in amended Claims 4 and 13. The only voice prompting that appears in the Bates patent again relates to the voice pattern matching application, wherein the user is asked to speak a phrase and the voice recognition application compares the spoken voice pattern with a stored voice

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pattern. There is absolutely no mention in the Bates patent of the user being asked to verbally provide a personal identification number (PIN) to initiate a telephone call, as defined in Claim 4 and 13. Accordingly, for this additional reason it is respectfully submitted that Claims 4 and 13 patentably distinguish over the prior art.

### *Conclusion*

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, favorable consideration and allowance of the application with Claims 1, 3-10 and 12-14 are respectfully solicited. If the Examiner believes that a telephone interview would assist in moving the application toward allowance, he is respectfully invited to contact the Applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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